

2009/2010

Grade 6

Curriculum
Handbook
for Parents





• GRADE



Curriculum Handbook for Parents

2009–2010

This Curriculum Handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 6 curriculum. It includes:

- selected learning outcomes for each subject area from the provincial curriculum
- links to the Alberta Education Web site where more information can be found
- a feedback form.

Alberta Education

This document, along with most Alberta Education documents, can be found on the Web site at <http://education.alberta.ca>.

Parent documents referenced in this handbook, along with most Alberta Education documents, are available for purchase from:

Learning Resources Centre
12360 – 142 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5L 4X9
Telephone: 780-427-2767
Toll-free: 310-0000 (inside Alberta)
Fax: 780-422-9750
Internet: <http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html>

Telephone numbers referred to in this handbook can be reached, toll-free inside Alberta, by dialling 310-0000.

Arts, Communications and Citizenship
Telephone: 780-427-2984
Fax: 780-422-3745
E-mail: curric.contact@education.gov.ab.ca

French Language Education Services
Telephone: 780-427-2940
Fax: 780-422-1947
E-mail: LSB@edc.gov.ab.ca

Digital Design and Resource Authorization
Telephone: 780-427-2984
Fax: 780-422-3745
E-mail: curric.contact@education.gov.ab.ca

Learner Assessment
Telephone: 780-427-0010
Fax: 780-422-4200
E-mail: LAcontact@edc.gov.ab.ca

Distributed Learning
Telephone: 780-674-5350
Fax: 780-674-6561
E-mail: DLB.General@gov.ab.ca

Mathematics and Science
Telephone: 780-427-2984
Fax: 780-422-3745
E-mail: curric.contact@education.gov.ab.ca

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services
Telephone: 780-415-9300
Fax: 780-415-9306
E-mail: FNMIServices@gov.ab.ca

Special Education Branch
Telephone: 780-422-6326
Fax: 780-422-2039
E-mail: Special.Education@gov.ab.ca

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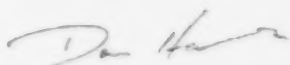
Message from the
Minister of Education

In today's busy households, where our Kindergarten to Grade 12 students are involved in every kind of extracurricular activity imaginable, it is especially important parents and guardians are kept informed about what their students are learning in the classroom. That is why each year Alberta Education develops the curriculum handbooks series—an insightful guide that outlines what students across the province will learn at their respective grade levels.

We know you play a critical role in determining your child's future success. I am confident this handbook will engage you in Alberta's curriculum, your student's studies, and answer any questions you may have on what your child is learning. I also hope this publication will create an opportunity for open dialogue between you, your child and his or her teacher regarding curriculum outcomes and expectations.

Alberta's curriculum is recognized for its excellence—and our students are thriving as a result. I encourage you to see this handbook as a window into your child's learning and as a resource in understanding how we help students reach their full potential. If you have any questions about the content of this handbook, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or school.

I hope you find this handbook helpful and informative and I wish you and your student every success this school year.



Dave Hancock, Q.C.
Minister, Alberta Education



► Introduction

Web site links for further information are provided throughout the handbook.

Students learn in a variety of environments—in their homes, schools and communities. Parents, teachers and community members form a partnership to assist this learning.

When parents know what children are studying at school, they can provide better home support for their children's learning. The *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents* are designed to assist parents in participating in their child's education by fostering an understanding of what students learn at each grade level.

Finding Information

Parents can find information about the curriculum and learning resources in a number of ways:

- Contact teachers or school administrators.
- **Curriculum Handbooks** contain selected outcomes for each subject area from the Alberta programs of study. They provide a more detailed picture of each year. This Curriculum Handbook is one of a set from Kindergarten to senior high school produced in general and Catholic versions and in French. They are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).
- **Curriculum Summaries** for each grade level provide a brief overview of each year. The summaries are available on the Alberta Education Web site.

<http://education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/handbook.aspx>

<http://education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/summaries.aspx>

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program.aspx>

<http://education.alberta.ca/apps/lrdb>

<http://education.alberta.ca>

- In Alberta, the provincial curriculum is organized into **Programs of Study**. They contain learning outcomes for each subject area from Kindergarten to Grade 12. They are legal documents that outline why the educational program is offered, what students are expected to learn and the basic principles about how students are to achieve the required knowledge, skills and attitudes. School authorities use the **Programs of Study** to ensure that students meet provincial standards of achievement. However, they have flexibility to decide how to teach the curriculum and the order in which it is taught. They are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).
- The Authorized Resources Database on the Alberta Education Web site lists **Alberta authorized student and teacher resources**, most of which are available for purchase from the LRC.
- The **Alberta Education Web site** contains information on learning from the early years to adulthood.

Helping Your Child at Home

Here are some important pointers for you to help your child learn.

- Be positive and encouraging in your approach to learning. It will help your child feel confident and enthusiastic about success.
- Talk to your child about schoolwork and help with homework when you can.
- Help your child set realistic goals and discuss progress in an encouraging way.
- Connect your child's schoolwork with everyday life and use these opportunities for problem solving in everyday situations.
- Keep in touch with teachers about your child's progress, including successes and achievements, not just concerns.

The following resources may help you. Check your child's school for availability.

This resource is available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at <http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html>

- *The Parent Advantage: Helping Children Become More Successful Learners at Home and School, Grades 1–9*—Strategies parents can use to help their child improve organizational, reading, writing, spelling, mathematical, test taking and project skills at the grades 1–9 levels.

<http://education.alberta.ca/media/356481/mathprbk.pdf>

<http://learnalberta.ca>

<http://www.2learn.ca>

- *Working Together in Mathematics Education*—Ways parents can support student learning in mathematics.
- *LearnAlberta.ca* Web site—Online multimedia learning resources that directly relate to the Alberta programs of study.
- *TELUS 2Learn* Web site—An education/business partnership that provides Internet in-service, support and information for Alberta teachers, students and parents.

GRADE

6

In Grade 6, students study required subject areas. Optional subject areas may be available at the local school. Students have access to a minimum of 950 hours of instruction each school year.

Overview

The Grade 6 Alberta program of studies for each subject area sets out general outcomes or topics that provide an overview of the important learnings students accomplish. Specific outcomes are included for each general outcome or topic and state in detail the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are working toward achieving.

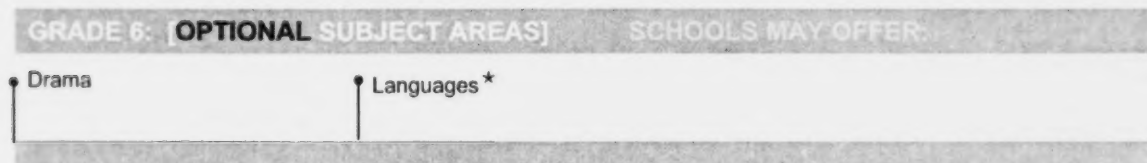
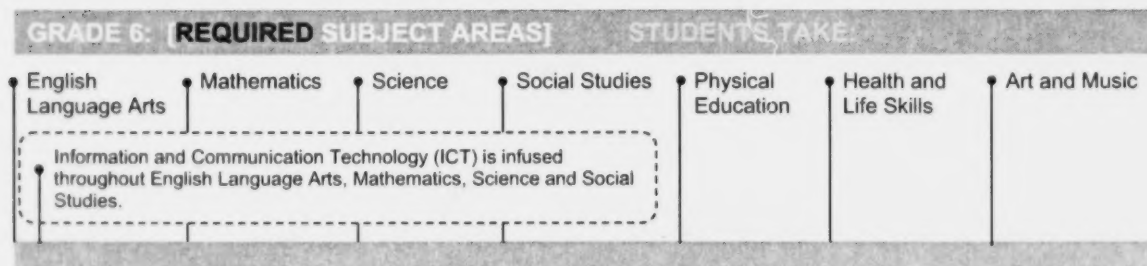
View the programs of study at
<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program.aspx>

Purchase programs of study from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).
 Order online at
<http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html>

This handbook contains:

- the general outcomes or topics for each subject area
- selected specific outcomes for most subject areas.

The programs of study, which include all the general and specific outcomes, are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).



* Students in French immersion programs and bilingual programs in other languages take English language arts as well as language arts in the target language.

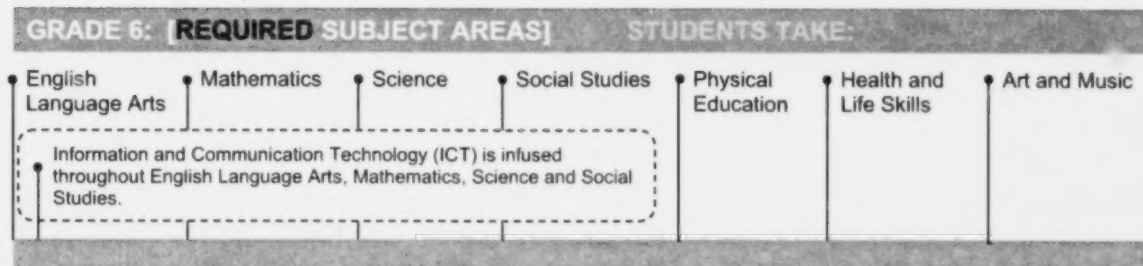
New Courses for 2009–2010 School Year:

- Social Studies (English and French)

Courses Scheduled for Implementation in 2010–2011:

- Mathematics (English and French)

▼ The **required subject areas** are the foundation of the elementary program.



English Language Arts

View the English language arts subject page at

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/english.aspx>

View the English Language Arts interactive video series on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at <http://learnalberta.ca>

There are two basic aims of English language arts. One aim is to encourage, in students, an understanding and appreciation of the significance and artistry of literature. A second aim is to enable each student to understand and appreciate language and to use it confidently and competently for a variety of purposes, with diverse audiences and in a range of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and learning.

From Kindergarten to Grade 12, students are developing knowledge, skills and attitudes in six language arts: Listening and Speaking; Reading and Writing; Viewing and Representing. Students learn to compose, comprehend and respond to oral, print and other media texts. They experience a variety of texts from many cultural traditions.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 English Language Arts Program of Studies.

Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences

- use prior experiences with oral, print and other media texts to choose new texts that meet learning needs and interests
- assess personal language use, and revise personal goals to enhance language learning and use
- select from the ideas and observations of others to expand personal understanding
- use talk, notes, personal writing and representing, together with texts and the ideas of others, to clarify and shape understanding

Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts

- combine personal experiences and the knowledge and skills gained through previous experiences with oral, print and other media texts to understand new ideas and information
- preview the content and structure of subject area texts, and use this information to set a purpose, rate and strategy for reading
- integrate and apply knowledge of phonics, sight vocabulary, language and context clues, and structural analysis to read unfamiliar words in texts of increasing length and complexity
- summarize oral, print or other media texts, indicating the connections among events, characters and settings
- discuss the connections among plot, setting and characters in oral, print and other media texts
- determine purpose and audience needs to choose forms, and organize ideas and details in oral, print and other media texts

Manage ideas and information

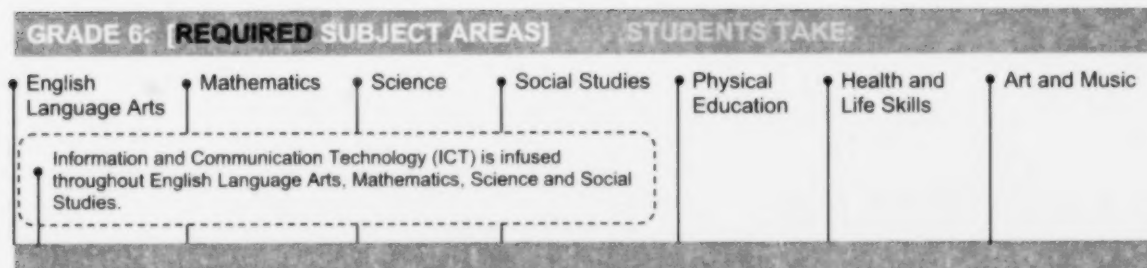
- use note-taking or representing to assist with understanding ideas and information, and focusing topics for investigation
- decide on and select the information needed to support a point of view
- skim, scan and read closely to gather information
- use outlines, thought webs and summaries to show the relationships among ideas and information and to clarify meaning
- communicate ideas and information in a variety of oral, print and other media texts, such as multiparagraph reports, question and answer formats and graphs
- establish goals for enhancing research skills

Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication

- revise to provide focus, expand relevant ideas and eliminate unnecessary information
- write legibly and at a pace appropriate to context and purpose
- experiment with a variety of software design elements, such as spacing, graphics, titles and headings, and font sizes and styles, to enhance the presentation of texts
- use complex sentence structures and a variety of sentence types in own writing
- edit for and correct commonly misspelled words in own writing, using spelling generalizations and the meaning and function of words in context
- use various styles and forms of presentations, depending on content, audience and purpose
- emphasize key ideas and information to enhance audience understanding and enjoyment
- identify the tone, mood and emotion conveyed in oral and visual presentations

Respect, support and collaborate with others

- identify ways in which oral, print and other media texts from diverse cultures and communities explore similar ideas
- demonstrate respect by choosing appropriate language and tone in oral, print and other media texts
- assume a variety of roles, and share responsibilities as a group member
- address specific problems in a group by specifying goals, devising alternative solutions and choosing the best alternative
- assess own contributions to group process, and set personal goals for working effectively with others



Mathematics

View the mathematics subject page at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/math.aspx>

View mathematics digital resources on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at <http://learnalberta.ca>

The aim of the mathematics program is to prepare students to:

- use mathematics confidently to solve problems
- communicate and reason mathematically
- appreciate and value mathematics
- commit themselves to lifelong learning
- become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics to contribute to society.

Students are expected to learn how to:

- communicate mathematically
- connect mathematical ideas to everyday experiences and to other subject areas
- use estimation and mental mathematics where appropriate
- relate and apply new mathematical knowledge to problem solving
- reason and justify their thinking
- use appropriate technologies as a tool to solve problems
- use visualization to assist in solving problems, processing information and making connections.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Mathematics Program of Studies.

Number

- develop a number sense for decimals and common fractions, explore integers, and show number sense for whole numbers
- apply arithmetic operations on whole numbers and decimals in solving problems

Patterns and Relations

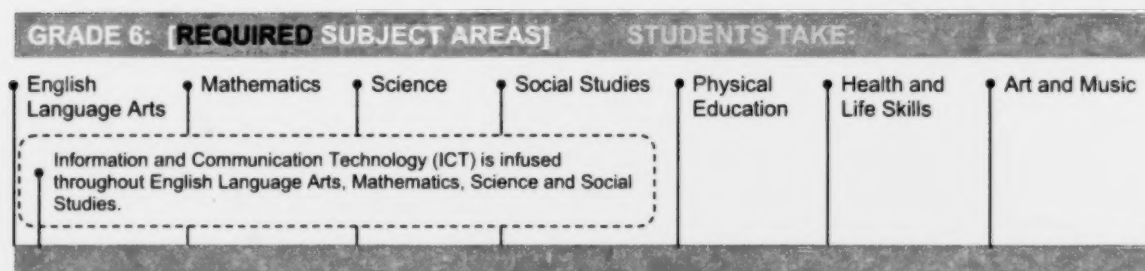
- use relationships to summarize, generalize and extend patterns, including those found in music and art
- use informal and concrete representations of equality and operations on equality to solve problems

Shape and Space

- solve problems involving perimeter, area, surface area, volume and angle measurement
- use visualization and symmetry to solve problems involving classification and sketching
- create patterns and designs that incorporate symmetry, tessellations, translations and reflections

Statistics and Probability

- develop and implement a plan for the collection, display and analysis of data gathered from appropriate samples
- use numbers to communicate the probability of single events from experiments and models



Science

View the science subject page at
<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/science.aspx>

View science digital resources on the
 LearnAlberta.ca Web site
 at <http://learnalberta.ca>

The aim of the science program is to encourage and stimulate children's learning by nurturing their sense of wonderment, by developing skill and confidence in investigating their surroundings, and by building a foundation of experience and understanding upon which later learning can be based. In elementary science, students develop their skills of inquiry and problem solving. They are also developing positive attitudes toward the study of science and the application of science in responsible ways.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Science Program of Studies.

Air and Aerodynamics

- describe the properties of air and the interactions of air with objects in flight
- study birds and airplanes and learn a variety of adaptations and designs that make flight possible and provide for propulsion and control

Flight

- develop a basic design, build it, test it, and solve the problems that inevitably arise
- learn, through teamwork, that planning, communication, cooperation and flexibility are important to the overall result—even though parts of a task can be worked on individually

Sky Science

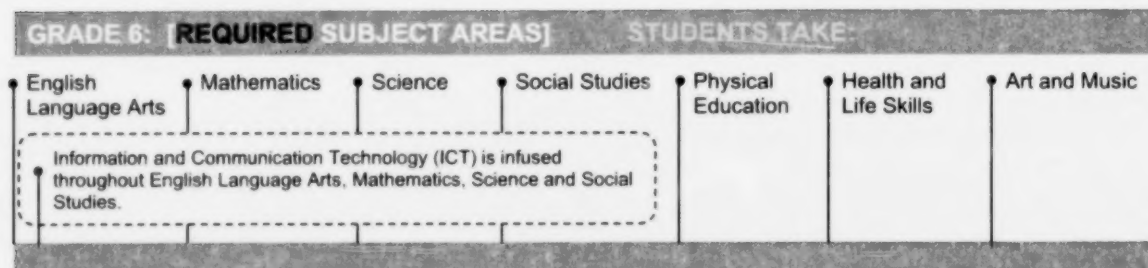
- move from a simple view of land and sky to one that recognizes Earth as a sphere in motion within a larger universe
- explore the topics of seasonal cycles, phases of the Moon, and the apparent motion of stars
- observe, describe and interpret the movement of objects in the sky; and identify pattern and order in these movements

Evidence and Investigation

- learn to pose questions, devise investigations, recognize patterns and discrepancies, and think logically about what they have observed
- apply observation and inference skills to recognize and interpret patterns and to distinguish a specific pattern from a group of similar patterns
- apply knowledge of the properties and interactions of materials to the investigation and identification of a material sample

Trees and Forests

- learn about a broad range of living things found on, under and around trees
- study the complex interaction between trees and the larger environment
- examine the human use of forests



Social Studies

View the social studies subject page at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/socialstudies.aspx>

The aim of the social studies program is to promote a sense of belonging and acceptance in students as they engage in active and responsible citizenship. At the heart of Alberta's social studies program are the concepts of citizenship and identity in the Canadian context. It also includes multiple perspectives, including Aboriginal and Francophone, that contribute to Canada's identity. The program also has a strong focus on Canadian and Alberta history.

Grade 6 students will broaden their understanding of democracy in the Canadian experience and develop an awareness of the active role that engaged citizens can play within the democratic process.

Grade 6 students will examine how participation in the democratic process is a means for governments and citizens to effect change in their communities. They will explore how democratic principles and ideals are reflected in the structure and functions of their local and provincial governments. Students will examine how ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy have influenced Canada's democratic processes.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Social Studies Program of Studies.

Citizens Participating in Decision Making

Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the dynamic relationship between governments and citizens as they engage in the democratic process.

Values and Attitudes

recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities:

- recognize and respect the democratic rights of all citizens in Canada
- value citizens' participation in a democratic society

Knowledge and Understanding

demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles of democracy by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- What is democracy (i.e., justice, equity, freedoms, representation)?
- How does Canada's justice system help protect your democratic and constitutional rights?

analyze how the democratic ideals of equity and fairness have influenced legislation in Canada over time by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How does the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protect the individual rights and freedoms of all Canadians?
- Why is the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms entrenched in the Canadian Constitution?

analyze the structure and functions of local governments in Alberta by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How are representatives chosen to form a local government (i.e., electoral process)?
- What role is played by school boards (i.e., public, separate, Francophone) within local communities?

analyze the structure and functions of Alberta's provincial government by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How is the provincial government structured?
- What are the differences between the responsibilities of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) and a cabinet minister?

analyze how individuals, groups and associations within a community impact decision making of local and provincial governments by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How can individuals, groups and associations within a community participate in the decision-making process regarding current events or issues (i.e., lobbying, petitioning, organizing and attending local meetings and rallies, contacting elected representatives)?

Historical Models of Democracy: Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy

Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the democratic principles exemplified by ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy.

Values and Attitudes

- appreciate the relationship between the values of a society and the model of government adopted within a society

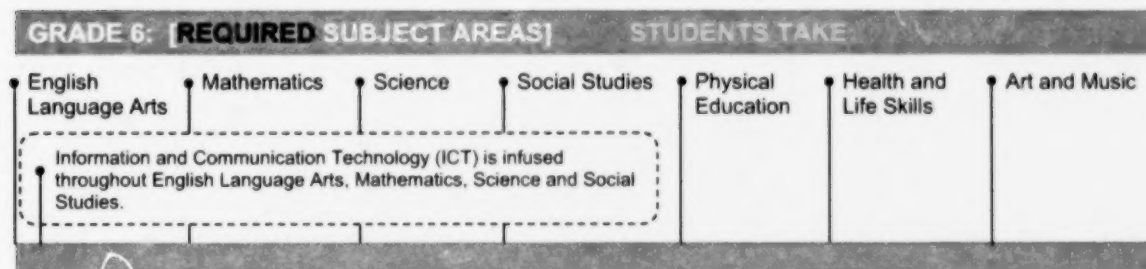
Knowledge and Understanding

analyze the structure and functions of the democratic system in ancient Athens by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How was the government of ancient Athens structured?
- To what extent were democratic ideals of equity and fairness part of the structure of government and society in ancient Athens?

analyze the structure and functions of the Iroquois Confederacy by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How was the Iroquois Confederacy structured?
- How did the Six Nations use the consensus-building process?



Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

View the information and communication technology subject page at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/ict.aspx>

Students learn how to use and apply a variety of information and communication technologies; the nature of technology and the importance of technology in daily life. ICT is learned most effectively in the context of subject areas such as language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. The ICT curriculum is not intended to be taught as a stand-alone course but rather to be infused within the teaching of other programs of study.

The ICT Program of Studies is organized by division. The following is a sample of the Division 2 learning outcomes that students are expected to meet by the end of Grade 6.

Communicating, Inquiring, Decision Making and Problem Solving

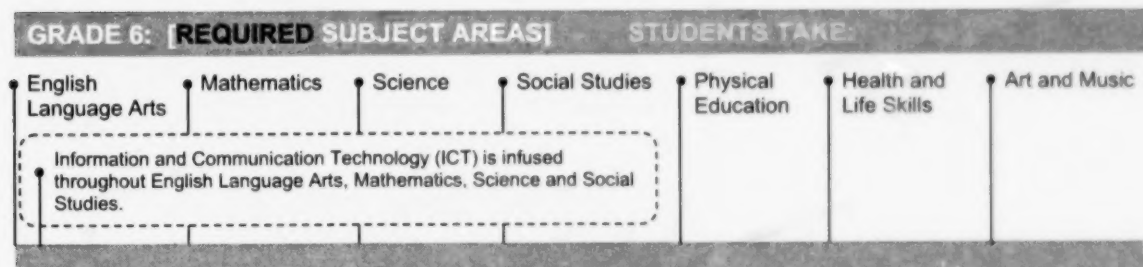
- access and retrieve appropriate information from the Internet by using a specific search path or from given uniform resource locations (URLs)
- select and use technology to assist in problem solving

Foundational Operations, Knowledge and Concepts

- identify and apply techniques and tools for communicating, storing, retrieving and selecting information
- examine the environmental issues related to the use of technology

Processes for Productivity

- edit and format text to clarify and enhance meaning, using such word processing features as the thesaurus, find/change, text alignment, font size and font style
- navigate through a document that contains links to locate, copy and then paste data to a new file



Physical Education

View the physical education subject page at
<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/pe.aspx>

The aim of the K–12 physical education program is to enable individuals to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to lead an active, healthy lifestyle. Students participate in a variety of physical activities: dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in alternative environments. All learning outcomes are met through physical activity as a means of fostering a desire in students to participate in lifelong physical activity.



General Outcome A: Activity

Students will acquire skills through a variety of developmentally appropriate movement activities; dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in an alternative environment; e.g., aquatics and outdoor pursuits.

- Basic Skills; Locomotor; Nonlocomotor; Manipulative
- Application of Basic Skills in an Alternative Environment, Dance, Games, Types of Gymnastics, Individual Activities

General outcomes B, C and D are interrelated and interdependent and are achieved through involvement in movement activities identified in General Outcome A.

**General Outcome B: Benefits Health**

Students will understand, experience and appreciate the health benefits that result from physical activity.

- Functional Fitness
- Body Image
- Well-being

**General Outcome C: Cooperation**

Students will interact positively with others.

- Communication
- Fair Play
- Leadership
- Teamwork

**General Outcome D: Do it Daily ... for Life!**

Students will assume responsibility to lead an active way of life.

- Effort
- Safety
- Goal Setting/Personal Challenge
- Active Living in the Community

Exemptions from Physical Education

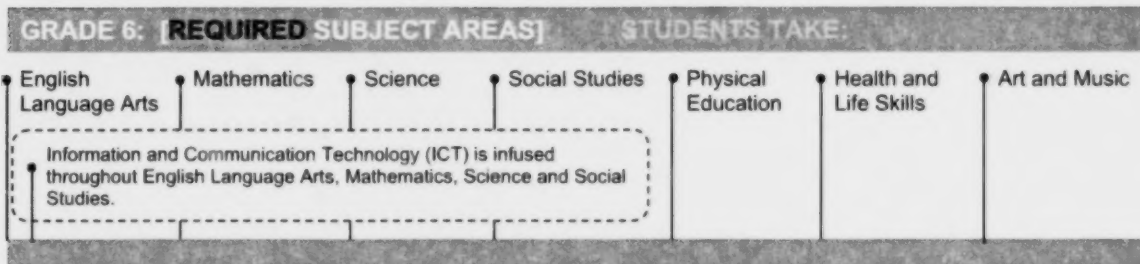
Exemptions from participation in physical education may be given for medical conditions, when accompanied by a medical certificate from a doctor to the principal; for religious beliefs, when accompanied by a statement in writing from the parent to the principal; and where access to facilities is prohibitive. When exemption is granted, activities consistent with the program outcomes should be substituted, where appropriate.

Physical Education Online

<http://education.alberta.ca/physicaleducationonline>

The Physical Education Online Web site provides a wealth of information to support student learning of the K–12 physical education program of studies. The site is organized into three major sections:

- Program of Studies—The general outcomes and grade specific outcomes for K–12.
- Teacher Resources—Links to authorized resources, the Guide to Implementation, teaching tools, and activities and lessons that address the outcomes for the K–12 physical education program.
- Home Education—This portion is designed for parents and teachers to use with students who may be enrolled in an online or home education physical education course.



Health and Life Skills

View the health and life skills subject page at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/health.aspx>

The aim of the health and life skills program is to enable students to make well-informed, healthy choices and to develop behaviours that contribute to the well-being of self and others. A comprehensive health program involves a partnership among home, school and community.



Wellness Choices

Students will make responsible and informed choices to maintain health and promote safety for self and others.

- Personal health
- Safety and responsibility



Relationship Choices

Students will develop effective interpersonal skills that demonstrate responsibility, respect and caring in order to establish and maintain healthy interactions.

- Understanding and expressing feelings
- Interactions
- Group roles and processes



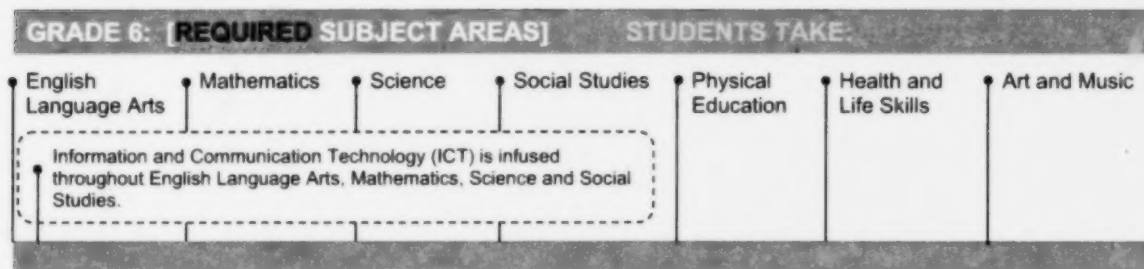
Life Learning Choices

Students will use resources effectively to manage and explore life roles and career opportunities and challenges.

- Learning strategies
- Life roles and career development
- Volunteerism

Human Sexuality Education

Schools are required to offer human sexuality education in Grade 4 to Grade 9. Parents have the right to exempt their child from this instruction. Schools will provide alternative learning experiences for those students who have been exempted from human sexuality instruction.



Art and Music

View the fine arts subject page at
<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/finearts.aspx>

Through art and music, students develop self-awareness and express their creativity in many ways. They respond personally and critically to a variety of art and music styles and forms.

Art

The aim of the art program is to enable students to learn visual arts skills and concepts, to interpret and communicate with visual symbols, to appreciate the cultural aspects of art, and to relate art to everyday life. The art curriculum has four major components: reflection, depiction, composition and expression.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Art Program of Studies.

- study and analyze the individual character of natural objects or forms
- impose standards on designed objects and invent improved versions
- modify forms by abstraction, distortion and other transformations
- perfect images through economical use of material and efficiency of effort
- express a feeling or a message
- use media and techniques, with an emphasis on more indirect complex procedures and effects in drawing, painting, print making, sculpture, fabric arts, photography and computer graphics

Music

The aim of the music program is for students to develop an enjoyment of music, an understanding of a variety of music styles and an insight into music through a variety of musical activities. The music program is developed around the concepts of rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expression. These concepts are learned through participating in six skill areas: listening, moving, singing, playing instruments, reading and writing, and creating.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Music Program of Studies.

- understand that there are many kinds of rhythm; e.g., ethnic rhythms, dance forms such as the waltz, tango
- understand that melodies may be based on other scales; e.g., ethnic, whole tone, atonal, chromatic, modal
- understand that longer forms of music, such as the concerto, opera and symphony, combine a variety of structural forms
- understand that the human voice has different timbral qualities
- recognize the sounds of electronic music
- sing songs written in a variety of scales
- understand the function of key signatures

- ▼ The range of optional subject areas offered by elementary schools varies from school to school depending on such factors as student and parent preferences, facilities and staffing.

GRADE 6: [OPTIONAL SUBJECT AREAS]**STUDENTS TAKE:**

Drama

Languages

Drama

View the drama subject page at
<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/finearts.aspx>

The aim of the drama program is for students to develop a positive self-concept by assuming other roles and acquiring dramatic skills. Play, dramatic play and structured dramatic play are the foundation for dramatic forms of expression. These include dramatic movement, mime, choral speech, storytelling, dramatization, puppetry, choric drama, readers' theatre, story theatre, playmaking and group drama.

Drama may be taught as a separate subject area or integrated with other subjects.

GRADE 6: [OPTIONAL SUBJECT AREAS] STUDENTS TAKE:

Drama

Languages

Languages

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/learnlang/educators/toolkit.aspx>

A variety of courses in languages are available throughout Alberta. These courses include First Nations, Métis and Inuit languages, French and International languages.

Alberta Education has approved numerous provincial language programs of study. As well, school authorities may develop and implement locally developed language courses to meet their needs.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Languages
Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/fnmi.aspx>

Blackfoot and Cree language and culture programs are designed to enable students to learn their respective languages and to increase awareness of their cultures.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study.

Blackfoot

- acquire basic communication skills in the Blackfoot language
- develop cultural sensitivity, and enhance personal development
- develop a desire to extend or improve proficiency in the Blackfoot language

Cree

- use Cree in a variety of community and school situations and for a variety of purposes
- be effective, competent and comfortable as Cree speakers (*Okiskinamawākanak ka nihtā nehiyawewak*)

- live (*wa*)*wētina(hk)* (peacefully) with Mother Earth, others and themselves, guided by *Ômâwawî Ohtâwîmâw* (the Creator)
- know and use various strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication

French

French Immersion Program

<http://education.alberta.ca/parents/educationsys/frenchlanguage/immersion.aspx>

In Alberta, many students have the opportunity to study in a French immersion program. This program, designed for non-French speaking students, offers an effective way for students to become functionally fluent in French while achieving all of the learning outcomes of the regular programs of study. Graduates from French immersion programs achieve a level of fluency in the target language that allows them to pursue their post-secondary studies in French or to accept employment in a workplace where French is the main language of communication.

There are many delivery models for French immersion present in Alberta schools.

- Early immersion—students begin their immersion experience in Kindergarten and continue in the program to Grade 12.
- Late immersion—the entry point is typically Grade 7.

Courses offered in the French language have as their basis a French version of the English language programs of study, which is identical or comparable to the one used in the English language programs. However, a program of studies specific to French immersion students was developed for the learning/teaching of French language arts. Some of the main French language arts learning outcomes are presented in the following section, French Language Arts.

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *Yes, You Can Help! Information and Inspiration for French Immersion Parents*. It is available for purchase from the LRC.

French Language Arts

<http://education.alberta.ca/francais/teachers/progres/core/fla.aspx>

In Division 2, the French language arts program of studies is intended to build on the skills acquired in the earlier grades, including vocabulary and sentence structure enrichment, to enable students to engage more actively with their environment. The program of studies also targets the development of the students' ability to plan and monitor their communication projects, whether they are working individually or with classroom partners. Students also learn to respect the basic rules of language in the oral discussions that take place in the classroom as well as in their writing projects.

In **oral comprehension**, students learn to pay particular attention to the organization of a message (text structure) and cues provided by the speaker (key words, connectives) to construct the meaning of the message and react to it.

In **reading comprehension**, students develop their ability to read longer, more complex texts. They learn to use a variety of tools to effectively solve difficulties they encounter in their reading.

In **oral production**, students learn the vocabulary and sentence structure that will enable them to express themselves in various contexts. They also develop the ability to plan group projects and to interact effectively with their peers.

In **writing**, students gradually learn to organize and express their ideas clearly, while still respecting spelling rules. They also learn to edit their texts using a checklist.

Note: The development of basic language skills does not take place in isolated exercises, but rather in context, so that students learn not only the rules but also when and how to apply them.

In Grade 6, learning occurs primarily:

In **oral comprehension** through:

- listening to texts from various subject areas
- listening to short stories or chapters from novels
- listening to audiotapes, such as documentaries
- viewing audiovisual materials, such as documentaries
- gathering information during classroom discussions.

Students learn to take advantage of their listening experiences to identify the most appropriate ways to overcome listening difficulties.

In **reading comprehension**:

Teachers will select 600 to 800 word texts of everyday life, or longer for narrative texts.

To develop reading strategies, students learn to take advantage of their listening experiences to identify the most appropriate ways to overcome difficulties. They also learn to become more independent in planning their research projects. They formulate expectations to help them choose a text to suit their needs and organize their notes to retain information.

In oral production:

Presentations and discussions should be well structured, with emphasis on:

- the correct use of connective words to organize their message
- the correction of phonetic Anglicisms
- the gender and number agreement for common words and expressions
- the application of solutions identified for overcoming a difficulty
- the organization of their presentations.

Emphasis on teamwork (interactive situations) enables students to continue developing certain skills required for interacting with their peers. They will independently continue work that was previously done with the teacher's help. This includes the rules for group work such as the roles and responsibilities of each person and their right to speak.

In writing:

Students learn to write texts consisting of a few paragraphs that present and develop a given topic. They also learn to write stories describing more than one event.

The main purpose of these learning activities is to enable students to integrate the basic elements of the written language:

- the choice and organization of ideas (web or plan)
- sentence variety and proper punctuation
- the choice of verb tense and verb agreement in common tenses
- the agreement of nouns and adjectives in common, irregular forms
- spelling and homophones.

<http://education.alberta.ca/francais/teachers/progres/compl/fsl.aspx>

French as a Second Language

In Alberta, the French as a Second Language (FSL) Nine-year Program is a course sequence in which the French language is taught as a subject. The goal of the course is to develop students' communication skills in French and acquire an appreciation and understanding of Francophone cultures in Alberta, Canada and the world.

Grade 6 is designed so that students integrate the knowledge and skills they acquired in grades 4 and 5, while expanding their language use so they can:

- understand and communicate, mostly by oral means, basic information related to their health and well-being, their neighbourhood, Alberta, the environment, *Le Carnaval de Québec* (Québec winter festival) and certain holidays and celebrations
- gain language knowledge needed to understand and communicate messages for the above themes
- recognize that Canada is a bilingual country and that our national anthem is sung in both languages
- identify different Francophone communities in Alberta
- develop and use language learning strategies that will help them improve their learning of French.

International Languages

Bilingual Programs

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/interlang.aspx>

Students in a bilingual program follow a language arts course in the target language (e.g., Spanish, Ukrainian) in addition to studying English language arts. In these programs, the target language is also used as the language of instruction in other subject areas, such as mathematics, science and social studies.

Students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing. They learn to use the target language confidently and competently in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and further learning. They are able to explore, understand and appreciate the cultures of the target language for personal growth and satisfaction, and to participate in and contribute to an interdependent and multicultural global society.

Alberta Education offers the following provincial courses for bilingual program students:

- Chinese (Mandarin) Language Arts
- German Language Arts
- Spanish Language Arts
- Ukrainian Language Arts

Language and Culture Programs

Students in a language and culture course study the target language (e.g., Ukrainian, German) as a subject area. Language and culture programs are designed to develop language and cultural skills.

Alberta Education offers provincially developed language and culture programs for Grade 4 students. At the elementary level in international languages, there are course entry points at Grade 1 and at Grade 4.

Students will:

- use the international language they study in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes
- use the international language effectively and competently
- acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become effective global citizens
- know and use strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication.

Alberta Education offers the following language and culture programs:

- Chinese Language and Culture
- German Language and Culture
- Italian Language and Culture
- Japanese Language and Culture
- Punjabi Language and Culture
- Spanish Language and Culture
- Ukrainian Language and Culture

Italian Language and Culture (Twelve-year Program) is the only provincial course sequence that begins at Grade 1 and extends through to Grade 12.

Locally Developed Language Courses

If there are no available provincial programs of study, school authorities may develop their own language course series. Currently, a variety of languages, e.g., Arabic, American Sign Language (ASL), Hebrew, Polish and Russian, are offered as local courses. Locally developed First Nations, Métis and Inuit language and culture courses may also be available to meet the needs of students in local or First Nations schools.

For more information on second language instruction offered in your area, please contact your local school board.

► Information for Parents

Learning in Alberta

Schools provide students with a broad educational program that helps them:

- develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in a variety of subject areas
- demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills in problem solving and decision making
- demonstrate competence in using information technologies
- know how to learn and work independently and as part of a team
- develop desirable personal characteristics and the ability to make ethical decisions
- demonstrate initiative, leadership, flexibility and persistence
- realize the need for lifelong learning.

Schools also prepare students to make positive contributions to society through communities, the workplace and/or post-secondary studies.

Teachers make a number of decisions when planning for classroom instruction. Within any group of students, there is a range of individual differences. Teachers use the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum to meet the needs and interests of their students and to make connections across subject areas. They choose resources, equipment and materials to help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teaching methods and schedules vary from school to school and from class to class to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

Alberta Education assists teachers by reviewing and selecting the best possible resources, such as textbooks, videotapes and computer software, for all subject areas. Authorization of resources by Alberta Education indicates that the resources meet high standards and can help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teachers can choose other resources, as long as they follow school board policy.

<http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html>

Authorized resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

School Councils

Schools, parents and communities all play an important advisory role in education. School councils are designed to give parents, senior high school students and teachers meaningful involvement in decisions that impact student learning. Each school council determines its own level of involvement, depending on local needs. Parents can get more information on how to get involved by contacting their school or the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA).

<http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca>

<http://education.alberta.ca/media/464094/scm.pdf>

The *Alberta School Council Resource Manual* provides information on the operation of school councils and on key topics of importance to school councils and other education stakeholders.

School Fees and Fundraising

Decisions regarding school fees and fundraising are made by the local board or by the school principal in consultation with the school council within policy guidelines established by the school board. In September 2000, the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) developed and provided guidelines to school boards to assist boards in establishing appropriate local policy.

http://www.asba.ab.ca/services_for_boards/policy_advisories_fees.html

The *School Act* allows for certain fees to be collected for alternative programs, transportation, or supplies and materials provided for the student's personal use or consumption; this may include such things as calculators, locker rentals, student planners and computer diskettes. The fees charged are on a cost recovery basis. Caution fees should be refunded at the end of the year if the item is returned in good condition.

The ASBA school fee advisory recognizes that fees should be waived for those who cannot afford them and that no student should be prohibited from participating.

http://www.asba.ab.ca/services_for_boards/policy_advisories_fund.html

Parents are not to fundraise for core items such as textbooks. Some fundraising is allowable for things like athletic uniforms, field trips and other extras that staff and parents want for their schools. Participation in fundraising activities should be voluntary. No student should be excluded from an event or program because the parents could not contribute.

School Choice

<http://education.alberta.ca/parents/choice.aspx>

Choice is one of the important principles of Alberta's education system. When it comes to selecting a school, parents and students can choose from a wide range of options. They can select from public schools, Catholic schools, Francophone schools, private schools and charter schools. They can also access a number of unique and innovative programs—including online schools. Parents can also opt to home school their children.

Inspiring Education

<http://www.inspiringeducation.alberta.ca>

Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans is an opportunity to shape the future of education in Alberta and we want to hear your perspective. Tell us your story. Share your opinions. Join the conversation! *Inspiring Education* is an exchange of ideas to change each other's thinking about what education is and what education means. It's about looking to the future and deciding what education in Alberta should be in 20 years.

► Information about Curriculum

Alberta has one of the best education systems in the world. One of the many reasons is a centralized, high quality curriculum that outlines what students are expected to learn and be able to do in all subjects and grades. Alberta's curriculum is designed to help students achieve their individual potential and create a positive future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Curriculum Content— Deciding What Students Should Learn

The Alberta curriculum strives to:

- reflect the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that Alberta students need to be well prepared for future learning and the world of work
- anticipate and plan for the needs of the future by considering the changes and developments in society such as trends in employment, globalization and advances in technology
- incorporate values of good citizenship and respect for different languages and cultures
- consider students' needs and abilities—intellectual, social, emotional and physical—at different ages and stages of growth
- ensure that each grade provides a foundation of knowledge for successful learning in subsequent years
- incorporate new discoveries and theories that are generally accepted by experts in subject areas
- develop skills that are necessary for success in learning a subject
- consider new research on proven teaching methods and how students learn best
- reflect the most appropriate level at which the skills are to be acquired
- integrate how the study of a subject contributes to student personal growth and development

- accommodate learning in different environments
- consider various ways of delivering a program to students, including new technologies and use of community resources such as distance learning and workplace learning.

Curriculum Development— Who Is Involved in the Process?

Alberta Education takes a lead role in developing and revising provincial curriculum. However, many others, including teachers, principals, parents, education experts, post-secondary educators, elders and community members, play a vital role in the process. Input from various stakeholders ensures that curriculum continually meets the needs of students and that there are smooth transitions from grade to grade, to post-secondary education and to the world of work.

Ensuring Curriculum Is Current

Curriculum must provide students with the knowledge and skills needed for the present and future. It is reviewed regularly and changes are made to keep it current and relevant. Curriculum revisions occur only after extensive consultations with education stakeholders.

Planning Curriculum Changes

Alberta Education plans curriculum changes well in advance to minimize any impact on schools, teachers and students. This ensures that school authorities have sufficient time to prepare for the changes and plan for the purchase of any needed resources.

Revising Curriculum

If it is determined through the regular review process that there is a need to make minor or major revisions to a subject area in the curriculum, education stakeholders play a major role in the process. Alberta Education conducts initial consultations and prepares a draft program of studies for that subject area. The draft is shared with a wide variety of education stakeholders through advisory committees, online feedback forms, conferences and presentations to teacher specialist councils. Teachers play a vital role in the process. They use their practical knowledge about a subject and about students' needs at specific age levels to provide input and feedback during the process.

Implementing Curriculum

The draft program of studies, developed in consultation with education stakeholders, is referred to the Minister of Education for approval. Schools may have the opportunity to pilot the program for one year prior to full provincial implementation. This transition year gives schools time to prepare for the new curriculum. When a curriculum is implemented province-wide, all schools must teach the new curriculum. Alberta Education, in partnership with superintendents, boards, teachers, principals, parents and students, shares roles and responsibilities in the effective implementation of a new curriculum.

Alberta Education supports school authorities by producing teacher resources that provide ideas for lesson planning, instructional strategies and student assessment. Also, it provides orientation for school authority leaders and lead teachers about curriculum changes and shares updates at professional conferences and in-services.

<http://www.arpcd.ab.ca>

Professional development funds are provided to seven Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia. Each Regional Consortium organizes and provides activities to respond to in-service needs identified locally. This may include information and orientation sessions related to curriculum revisions.

<http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html>

Alberta Education selects and authorizes learning and teaching resources that are designed specifically to support the provincial curriculum. Alberta Education also provides funding to help schools purchase learning and teaching resources through the Learning Resources Centre.

► First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi.aspx>

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi/policies.aspx>

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples throughout the province have indicated they want their children to complete regular school requirements and achieve the same standards as set for all students in Alberta. Alberta Education shares this goal with parents. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education Policy Framework (2002) provides further information.

To support the learning of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, schools are encouraged to use learning resources that include First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives. All students in Alberta need to understand and be aware of First Nations, Métis and Inuit history, culture, lifestyles and heritage. First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) perspectives are infused into the existing Kindergarten to Grade 12 programs of study. Student and teacher resources have been developed by Alberta Education to support the inclusion of FNMI content in teaching and learning.

Both provincially and locally authorized Blackfoot and Cree language and culture courses are offered in the province.

<http://education.alberta.ca/media/308566/aboriginalparenthandbook.pdf>

A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs (2000) provides information to assist First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents in working with schools to meet the special education needs of their children. This resource is available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

<http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/resources/item.htm?item-no=415712>

Our Treasured Children is a videotape that complements *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs*. It highlights intergenerational stories from members of the Aboriginal community. The videotape is available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

► Daily Physical Activity

For more information about the DPA policy and resources to support DPA, visit the DPA Web site at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/dpa.aspx>.

School authorities shall ensure that all students in grades 1 to 9 are physically active for a minimum of 30 minutes daily through activities that are organized by the school. Daily Physical Activity (DPA) is based on the belief that healthy students are better able to learn and that school communities provide supportive environments for students to develop positive habits needed for a healthy, active lifestyle.

Schools have the responsibility of creating and nurturing a learning environment for students that supports the development of the lifelong habit for daily physical activity and for healthy lifestyles. The daily physical activities offered in your school should:

- vary in form and intensity
- take into account each student's ability
- consider resources available within the school and the larger community
- allow for student choice.

Parents can assist implementation of DPA and enhance the health benefits received by students through a supportive home environment; e.g., encouraging your child to be active every day, walk your child to school or facilitate a walking school bus program at school.

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/>

For further information and ways to increase physical activity at home, visit the Healthy U Web site or the Public Health Agency of Canada's Web site.

► Career and Life Planning

Preparing for life and connecting learning and work is a complex process that begins in the early years of schooling and continues throughout our lives. Alberta schools are taking an active role—along with parents and the community—in helping students manage transitions within the K–12 learning system and when moving into further education, training, and/or the workplace.

In the elementary grades, students begin to discover their interests and abilities, and start to become aware of the opportunities available in the world of work. They also begin to develop life skills, such as cooperating with others and being reliable.

Personal and career development activities and outcomes are integrated into elementary courses and programs. In particular, the elementary health program focuses specifically on these topics.

▀ Supports for Learning

Students have individual learning needs. Schools, supported by Alberta Education, provide a variety of programs and services to meet the individual needs of students.

English as a Second Language

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/esl.aspx>

Many children born in Canada have a first language other than English and many students move here from non-English speaking countries. Schools provide additional assistance for English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Kindergarten to Grade 12. This helps them acquire sufficient fluency in English so they can function in the regular classroom as quickly as possible.

Special Education

<http://education.alberta.ca/admin/special/resources/learningteam.aspx>

Some students require specialized learning opportunities in order to receive an education. School boards must provide special education programming that is consistent with the student's identified learning needs. If you feel your child would benefit from additional support, you should talk to the classroom teacher. Your child's teacher or the school principal will have information about the special education services and programming available through the school jurisdiction. To assist you in discussing your child's needs, access *The Learning Team: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs* through the link provided.

Distributed Learning

Alberta Education provides leadership and resources for distributed learning in Alberta's educational institutions. Distributed learning is a model through which learning is distributed among a variety of delivery formats and mediums—print, digital (online) and traditional delivery methods. Teachers, students and content can be located in different, noncentralized locations, enabling student learning any time, any place and at any pace.

<http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html>

Distributed learning resources are provincially authorized resources that support educational program delivery in Alberta. For information about purchasing distributed learning resources, contact the Learning Resources Centre.

Digital Resources to Support Curriculum Outcomes

<http://learnalberta.ca>

LearnAlberta.ca is a Web site that provides quality online resources to the Kindergarten to Grade 12 community in Alberta. It is a safe, reliable and innovative collection of learning resources provided by Alberta Education. Students, teachers and parents can access multimedia learning resources here that are based on Alberta Education curriculum guidelines. A featured resource is the Online Reference Centre, a collection of multimedia encyclopedias in French and English. These reference materials include newspapers, magazines, books, maps, pictures, videos and transcripts suitable for all grades and subject areas.

The Web site is password protected, with each school authority receiving a new username and password each August. Usernames and passwords are available from school principals or by contacting the Alberta Education Client Services HelpDesk between 8:15 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays:

Telephone: 780-427-5318 (toll-free using 310-0000)

E-mail: cshelpdesk@gov.ab.ca

Please note that you will need to provide the name of your school and school authority.

▣ Assessment

Assessing Student Achievement

In the classroom, a teacher uses a variety of means to assess students' learning throughout the school year. These assessments are based on the instruction being provided, in order to inform the teacher's planning from day to day. Classroom assessment may serve a diagnostic purpose, indicating students' strengths and weaknesses in specific skill areas. At other times classroom assessment may be formative, indicating how well students have achieved in a unit of study or how well they have achieved to a particular point in the course. At the end of a school year, a teacher also assesses how well the students have achieved the expected learning outcomes in the curriculum for that grade. This type of assessment is designed primarily for reporting purposes. All these classroom assessments are integral to instruction and are complemented by the provincial achievement tests.

Grade Level of Achievement (GLA)

Grade Level of Achievement is the teacher's professional judgement of a student's achievement in a core subject (language arts, mathematics, science and social studies).

Alberta teachers must report grades 1–9 student Grade Level of Achievement to parents.

<http://education.alberta.ca/media/938683/09002abedglabrocv2.pdf>

<http://education.alberta.ca/admin/testing/achievement.aspx>

Provincial Achievement Tests

As well as being assessed by their teachers throughout the school year, students write provincial achievement tests at the end of grades 3, 6 and 9. Each achievement test provides a common measure for students across the province, based on the curriculum. The tests are designed to provide information about students' achievement in relation to provincial standards. This information is valuable to schools for review of programs and improvement of students' learning. As well, the information assists schools, school authorities and the province in reporting to parents and other Albertans on the achievement of students. Grade 6 students write tests in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Grade 6 students in French language programs write both the English and the French language arts tests and the French forms of the other subject area achievement tests.

The curriculum statements provided in the following pages serve as the basis for developing the achievement tests for the particular grade and course specified. Classroom teachers work with staff of Alberta Education to develop questions for the tests, and these questions are field tested in classrooms across the province. Teachers also participate in standards setting and in the marking of the language arts tests. The involvement of teachers and the information gained from field testing help to ensure that the achievement tests are appropriate for the students and accurately reflect the grade-level curriculum.

Detailed reports are provided to schools and school authorities on the achievement test results of their students. These reports indicate the percentages of students achieving the provincial standards on each test, and they provide information about students' performance in particular areas of the curriculum. A school also receives an Individual Student Profile (ISP) of results for each student who wrote the achievement tests. The ISP shows the student's scores on the tests in relation to the provincial standards. Duplicate copies of the ISP sheets are provided to the schools for the students' parents. Information about provincial achievement testing is provided in the *Parent Guide to Provincial Achievement Testing/Guide des parents Programme des tests de rendement provinciaux*.

A separate parent guide is available for Grade 3, Grade 6 and Grade 9, and copies of the guides are available in schools across the province. Additional information about achievement testing as well as released achievement tests and examples of students' writing are available on the Alberta Education Web site.

Feedback Form

Curriculum Handbook for Parents 2009–2010: Grade 6

Please indicate whether you are a:

☐ Parent ☐ Teacher ☐ School Administrator ☐ District Administrator ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Please indicate whether you used:

☐ a print copy ☐ the online format ☐ both

Please respond to the following by placing a check mark under **Strongly Disagree**, **Disagree**, **Agree** or **Strongly Agree**.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The handbook provides useful information.				
2. The amount of information is appropriate.				
3. The reading level is appropriate.				
4. The layout and organization are user-friendly.				
5. The links to the Alberta Education Web site are helpful.				
6. Downloading and printing is easy.				

Grade: Kindergarten 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Senior High
Grade level used: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How can this handbook be made more helpful to parents?

Thank you for your feedback.

Please send your response to:

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Alberta Education
10044 – 108 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5J 5E6
Fax: 780-422-3745

